

Montgomery County Finance Department Performance Measurement Activities

The Montgomery County Department of Finance is committed to using performance measurement to manage Departmental programs, including achievement of mission and program results, to support the decision making and resource allocation process, and for accountability and reporting to internal and external audiences. To this end, the Department has conducted, or continues to conduct the following activities:

FY98: 1997 - 1998

- Provided training to Departmental managers and staff on goal-driven performance measurement and benchmarking.
- Reviewed and revised program descriptions to focus on what the Department hopes to accomplish. Refined the Department's Mission Statement to focus on those area that are critical to the Department's mission, including: prudently manage financial operations, recommend and implement sound fiscal policies, safeguard public assets, and encourage a safe environment on public property.
- Adopted the County's Vision Statement and Guiding Principles, and developed guiding principles specific to the Department of Finance.
- Developed a preliminary set of departmental program measures, focusing on using measures that communicate well, that "represent" a program in terms of a limited number of effective performance factors, and, in the interest of economy, that use as much existing data as possible. Measures were felt to be especially useful if they served the needs of program managers, the Department, and accountability for results.

FY99: 1998-1999

- Revised performance measures, and developed program measures presentations that were included in the *County Executive's FY2000 Recommended Operating Budget and Public Services Program*. The Department of Finance developed presentations for nine programs, representing almost 20 percent of the County programs for which program measures were developed for the FY2000 budget.
- Department staff provided assistance to the Office of Management and Budget and other departments in the development of performance measures, including review of, and recommendations on all 46 programs included in the Executive's recommended budget.

- Entered into an agreement with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). GASB received a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to conduct research on the use of performance measures in jurisdictions with a history of developing and using performance measures, including reporting to the public. Under the terms of the agreement, the Department of Finance staff is a member of GASB's Research Advisory Team. Activities included developing the case study methodology, designing survey instruments, and pilot testing the instrument in Prince William County, Virginia. By supporting GASB's research, the Department gets first hand experience learning from the experiences of others, collects materials with which to benchmark the Department's programs, and stays at the leading edge of research that may result in future performance measurement reporting requirements. For more information, see the GASB web page at www.seagov.org, then select Performance Measurement for Government.

FY2000: 1999-2000

- Finance staff continue to serve as a member of GASB's Performance Measurement Research Advisory Team. Activities included site visits to Richmond, Virginia; Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona; Greensboro and Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and Portland and Multnomah County, Oregon. Staff will be developing case studies to be distributed at the Managing for Results Conference in Austin, Texas (April 25 – April 29, 2000 in Austin, Texas). For more information, check the Conference web page at <http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/profdev/candt/results/>.
- Finance Department program measures are being refined for the County Executive's *FY01 Recommended Operating Budget and Public Services Program*. Two additional programs will be included in FY01 (Internal Audit and Financial Systems Control). In addition, a departmental program measures page with high level performance measures will be developed. The revised measures will be available on this site some time after March 15, 2000.
- The Finance Department will be issuing a Request for Proposal to conduct Performance Measurement Quality Reviews of Finance Department and other County performance measurement systems and data. Reviews are intended to assist department and program managers by reviewing performance measurement systems for features that enhance the relevance, reliability, understandability, consistency, comparability, and timeliness of data, as recommended by GASB. Reviews will also examine the relationship between measures and program mission and goals, and whether information is useful and used by managers and staff.